



Statement of Intent

I am pleased to provide the Minister for Social Services with my Statement of Intent, in response to his Statement of Expectations, dated 29 January 2016. I formally commit the Australian Institute of Family Studies (the Institute) to meeting the expectations of the Minister for Social Services, in accordance with the legislative framework of the *Family Law Act 1975*, and to undertake an annual review, as required.

This will be achieved through the following responses to each expectation:

- The Institute will undertake impartial, policy-relevant research on a broad range of family-related issues that is of the highest standard and of value to key stakeholders from its contract undertakings and other activities; and act as a source of expertise in providing research-based information on family issues to a range of portfolios across the Australian Government.
- The Institute will work collaboratively with the Department of Social Services to ensure that its research informs and influences policy development and assists the Government to make informed decisions on work and family issues.
- The Institute will provide the Minister with regular briefings on the activities of the Institute and any significant events and emerging issues relating to the business of the Institute in a timely manner and provide relevant information to the Department in parallel, including responding to requests from the Minister's office in a timely manner.
- The Institute will pursue research opportunities consistent with the priority areas outlined in the Institute's Agency Plan, as well as actively disseminating research findings to policy makers, practitioners and the general public across Australia and internationally.

In performing its role and pursuing the priorities outlined above, the Institute will:

- Maintain mutually-beneficial working relationships with key stakeholders, including the Australian Government, State and Territory and local governments, providers of services to families and children, researchers and policy-makers and the broader Australian community.
- Work within the frameworks of all relevant legislation (including the *Family Law Act 1975* and the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*) covering its responsibilities to the Annual report, risk management, proper use and management of public resources, budget estimates, corporate plans, accounting records and preparation and auditing of annual financial statements, as well as exercising powers and discharging duties in good faith in the best interests of the Institute and therefore the Commonwealth.
- Ensure staff employed by the institute adhere to the *Public Service Act 1999* (PS Act), uphold and promote the Australian Public Service (APS) Values, adhere to the APS code of Conduct as provided by Section 13 of the PS Act. The Institute will also comply with the APS Bargaining Framework.

The Institute and the Department operate within the same broad platform in a manner consistent with the requirements established by the *Family Law Act*. As the Secretary of the Department plays an important role in providing the government with policy advice in its oversight of portfolio agencies, conducive to an effective working relationship, the Institute will continue to consult with the Department on any issues that may impact its obligations under relevant legislation and will similarly inform the Secretary (or the Department) of relevant issues and information affecting the portfolio.

In conclusion the Institute is committed to ensuring it remains a high performing and responsive agency that makes a profound and positive contribution to the lifetime wellbeing of Australian families by providing research that advances knowledge and informs family policy and service delivery.

Anne Hollonds, Director

Dated: 9 March 2016